

Light:

A Journal devoted to the Highest Interests of Humanity, both Here and Hereafter.

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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SATURDAY, AUGUST 13, 1881.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

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SPIRITUALISM—UTILITARIANISM.

There is a key-word for the progress or retrogression of every century, in every land. Historians of the future will probably summarise the nineteenth century as an Age of Utility. The life of old-world ideas faded out in the sulphurous fires of the French Revolution of 1789, which let loose a new outburst of human energy. The spirit of man throughout all nations has, since that time, worked itself out into a visible grandeur of accomplishment. On the face of its mother earth it has built up a new world. It has remodelled its capital cities, and lined them with handsome boulevards. It has tossed aside its Divine-right monarchs and made kings of democracies. It has annihilated time and connected all the ends of the earth by the electric telegraph and railroad. It has consecrated wide schemes of cosmopolitan philanthropy, and organised far-reaching plans of multiform charity. It has made war so terrible as all but to affright the peoples into the ideas of the Peace Society. It has penetrated matter by its science, and trodden upon the verge of the Unseen reality behind. It has written in fiction the perfect delineation of human life; philosophies that stretch out to reach the eternals; and poetry that soars with eagles' wings into the infinities of heaven. The life of humanity in this century has been vehement, variform, and, above all, *utilitarian*.

Such an age has its besetting temptation, like every other. There is a shadow attendant upon every light. Its utility has enriched man with a flood-tide of blessing, but in the progress on many sides of human nature, which is characteristic of this age, there is perceivable the tendency to eschew the transcendental, and that which lies beyond the visible and material. In the midst of all this vehemency of life and achievement comes a cry from its highest culture—and the clear expression of its lower minds too,—“Is life worth living?” The greatest spirits of the age die in darkness. Harriet Martineau takes “a leap in the dark”; George Eliot dies a disciple of Positivism, with its dark night beyond the tomb; and Carlyle dies crying that he leaves the world in chaotic muddle. Why is this? The spirit of the age is a sublime one, but there are fastening upon it the coils of its foe. It is Utilitarian in its way of thinking, and looking at things; and beneath the pressure of that sentiment Immortality is becoming a phantasmal dream, and God is ceasing to be a practical force.

So stands the century, as seen in its last twenty years. It is a gloomy prospect. In spite of all its brilliance, if it lose the pure ambition and soaringness which the twofold and mutually-inclusive ideas of Immortality and God can alone inspire, its fate is sealed. Man without a deathless future and a Father-God is like the eagle paralysed in wing in mid-air, and falling with its unabashed eye still upon the sun. He may exult over his conquests, but, like Alexander at Babylon, insane with success, will die intoxicated with sensual indulgence.

To such an age, with such a dominant spirit, Spiritualism has a profound mission. It is the counterfoil of the century. Where science has destroyed the authoritative in religion, Spiritualism steps in with the reconstructive triumph of demonstrative fact. The spirit of the age will tolerate nothing in the sphere of belief that rests not on tangible proof. Spiritualism is in strict accord with the demand, and answers by a million audible voices from another sphere of human life. Nothing ever had a sublimer mission than Spiritualism. It meets the weak point of the period and restores the balance of power in the progress of man.

But Spiritualism must, as a law of its own ascent to power, fall into line with the tendency of the age—Utility. “By their works ye shall know them,” says the New Testament. That is the critical standard by which our sacred cause will be judged. It must not have written upon it by angelic hands, abandoning the effort to save and prosper it—“Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin”—weighed in the balance and found wanting. Every Spiritualist individually must be a being of utility. As his intercourse is of a higher kind than that of disbelievers, the manifestation of it must be accordant. Spiritualism must be identified with every department of human life. Science, literature, platform, pulpit, senate, must be entered by it. The nearest approach to Spiritualism in the religious world is Quakerism. One of the great proofs of the genuineness of that ideal faith is its practical effect. We doubt whether any sect can anything like approach the number of public benefactors and useful citizens, proportionate to its adherents, that Quakerism has produced. The roll of Quaker heroes, from George Fox and William Penn to John Bright, the Sturges, and the Peases, is not only brilliant but numerous. It is a startling fact that one of the most mystical faiths of modern Christendom has produced the most practical of followers. Its adherents are eminent in commerce, philanthropy, and politics. The force of their religion has shewn itself in their lives. It is strange, too, to reflect that Quakers have never been a poor body. If they believe in poverty of spirit, like their Master, Christ, they do not believe in a spirituality which surrounds its bodily life with meagre diet, ragged garments, or wretched homes. This is as it should be. Christianity was not a gospel of asceticism. It began at a marriage feast, and its most glorious prophecy is that it shall end in the “marriage supper of the Lamb.”

The end of Spiritualism, we apprehend, is one of intense utility. It is not a mere sentiment. It is to be the potency that shall energise a dying sensualised race with real human force, and endow it with such an elevating power that it shall rise heavenwards with ever accelerating momentum.

To this end Spiritual investigation must fall into two lines. First, there must be the science of methodic investigation, and second, the science of utilizing our acquired knowledge in a multiplicity of channels. Spiritualism is essentially a religion—not a theology, but a religion—but, unlike popular and obsolete ones, a religion that is inclusive of the whole of human life. Religion is the science of living rightly in all our relations. As Spiritualists we know nothing of secular duties and religious duties; of holy days and places and secular ones; of Sunday reading and week-day literature. Our religion sanctifies every act and moment to the glory of our Father-God, and, as a sequence, to the glory of our fellow men and selves. We are to be eminent in our piety, our joyousness, and our practicalness. The world cannot resist the evidence of such a life. It may sneer at our present insignificance, but it will eventually hush its clamours, and finally fall into our wake. Such a life, too, is the real secret of success in Spirit-intercourse. Discordances in Spirit-revelations will gradually melt away before the contact of such a phalanx of pure and practical life. The age is utilitarian in its demand; the Spirits of the highest spheres are essentially utilitarian in their first aims; and we on the earth-side of the intercourse must be utilitarian in our lives. With such a blending Spiritualism will cease to be styled “the craze of small-brained fools;” it will be a self-evident science, a patent wisdom.

The Hon. Alex. Aksakof returned from Ventnor on Friday, the 5th inst., and left London for Paris on Sunday morning last, the 7th inst. During his brief visit to the Metropolis he took advantage of the opportunity for attending a few private séances with several well-known mediums. M. Aksakof will stay for a short period at Biarritz, and contemplates visiting Spain and Italy prior to returning to St. Petersburg in October next.

THE "POWERS OF THE AIR."

(Continued from page 246.)

At the time I was undergoing these strange experiences, I became acquainted with the distinguished medium, Judge J. W. Edmonds, judge of the Supreme Court, New York, whose daughter, Miss Laura Edmonds, a most gifted seeress or trance medium, most kindly gave me continued opportunities to receive communications through her mediumship, which was by means of trance, in which she either wrote or spoke the matter communicated. As some example of the communications I received through her, I give the following; written in my presence, her eyes closed, and the head in such a position in regard to the paper on which she wrote that she could not have seen it had her eyes been open. Yet every letter was exactly on the ruled line. The subject was the condition of the soul in the next world, consequent on its degradation and abuse in this. The Spirit appearing to and controlling Miss Edmonds was the same that had previously manifested to me. It said:—

"As I told you of my Spiritual birth, I will tell you of that which I experienced in my search for knowledge. I have drawn near to the couch of the miser when his Spirit was just leaving the form. I have gone from him to the death bed of the little child, and have contrasted the two scenes, and learned many lessons therefrom. I saw that the worldly man was bound down by shackles that he could not break; he had lived a selfish life, gratifying his own desires, seeking gain, not looking within, nor heeding the voice constantly warning him, but contracting his mind, covering his powers with dross, and the better emotions feebly lived. I watched the dying man. He knew not the future; he feared to ask; he feared to look; and he only thought of that which he could not take with him. I was near the couch when the Spirit or life-principle left the clay, and I saw but a spark resting on the atmosphere around that form. I could not discern the Spirit-form, but merely a cloud-like mass resting quietly in the air, and I asked a gentle Spirit, who was my guide, where the Spirit of the man had gone, and he replied, 'Seeker for truth, his soul is within that mass, within that cloud. On earth he had not given food or drink to that soul, and it merely lived because it could not die. He had not yielded to its cry for strength, but had kept it within a narrow cell, and as he advanced in years the walls of that cell grew stronger and more impenetrable, and when the body had ceased its work then the walls crumbled, and the gem planted within that casket by a loving Father was merely as a spark thrown from the furnace of the forges. 'And how long,' I asked, 'must it remain in that peculiar state?' 'Until the elements that the Spirit required are brought to a certain point and then the Spiritual form will be visible. That spark must linger near the earth, and its angel guides will direct it and care for it, and as the body decays the Spirit will gradually form, for so great was the earthly attraction of that mind that the chord which binds the Spirit to the body has not yet been severed, and that Spirit will pass on and move in the atmosphere of those who are spiritual on earth, and receive from them elements to form a spiritual surrounding to that soul.' 'Then tell me, gentle Spirit, will the mind realise aught of this?' 'No, for it is in that sleeping state the sun of truth has not yet dawned upon it, and called it into action. It has been dormant for so many years that it will take some time to arouse the Spirit into action.'

"I watched these no longer, but hastened to the parting scene of the little child. She was pure and beautiful, with an intellect developed beyond her physical strength. The mother had guided that young plant carefully, and watched the spiritual growth, and given drink to that thirsty soul. The spirit was in such harmony with the form, it was so educated and called forth by the parents, that it received the elements readily which would form a *Spiritual body*. Its spirit had expanded beyond the casket that held it, and the Father said, 'Bring me the gem for it is now fitted for Heaven.' The child gently closed her eyes—one sigh, and the noble spirit had left its limited home, and I beheld it active, an individual pure and bright, able at once to comprehend and appreciate its surroundings. And I asked the gentle Spirit who had instructed me when gazing on the first lesson, why the spirit of the child should have formed so readily when the physical conditions were not so fully developed as in the first case, and he replied that the spiritual and physical had been educated alike until they had reached a certain point, when the spirit had perceived its

ability to enlarge, to progress, and while yet confined to the form it had lived in the spiritual land, and drawn from spiritual life the essences that would give it a form and a shape.

"I have, at a later stage, returned with my guide to the man, and I beheld him the fac-simile of what he was on earth. But I saw upon his countenance astonishment, and confusion, and regret plainly written, and the Spirit told me that now the work of retribution had begun. Memory was a most faithful servant, and was doing her work well, and that passage in the Bible which says, 'Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord,' should be somewhat altered and, instead, read 'Vengeance is mine, saith the soul,' for memory, thought, is undying, and the soul works out its own redemption, and prolongs its own day of judgment. And I asked my guide, 'Will he long remain thus?' 'Until he shall have answered every demand of his soul that he left unheeded in life. First, he must know and realise that he lives; secondly, that his soul has been neglected; thirdly, that he alone must answer its demands; fourthly, that he alone can work out its redemption; fifthly and last, he must feel within himself a reliance, a hope in the merciful Father, who will strengthen him in his efforts and will send him the light that he asks, and he will yet realise that which in his childhood spake to him in the stream, the mountain, the flower, that God is Love.'

It is impossible to comprehend a subject so vast in a single communication, but without laying down my pen I will give a few extracts from a communication from the same Spirit, also through Miss Edmonds, in answer to my request for the Spirit's views of religion.

Miss Edmonds, in the trance state, spoke, as nearly as my memory serves me, as follows:—

"In the first place, what is true religion? Is it living up to the principles that are innate within us? Each heart has a germ of goodness, and every soul feels at some time in its mortal life a desire to gratify emotions of good. In all grades of society, under varied circumstances, the heart cries out for justice and would act according to its Divine essence. Religion does not consist in carrying out the forms that please the outward senses, but it is living a response to the call of the Divine Spirit within us. The senses are a part of the outward man. They oftentimes are appealed to, and through the senses religion may reach the heart. The outward forms are necessary to some, to arouse them and attract, but the effect is not with the forms. The effect of the appeal to the senses is interior; the result must be from the heart. . . . In past ages, when man was more material than spiritual, religion was presented to him in a harsher form. He could not comprehend the gentleness of truth. In the Bible you will see many passages that represent the Supreme Being as a harsh, jealous, angry God, and as you read on you will find that the ancients could not comprehend a gentler Being as invested with power. It is folly at the present age to follow literally teachings of the Old Testament. It is well to take the moral teachings and apply them when you can.

"When you read the New Testament, you will find that Christ taught the law of Love, and He was only stern when He spoke the truth to sinners; but love actuated Him ever, and through His life He departed not from it. His followers, inspired with the same attribute, endeavoured to teach in the same spirit, but the old leaven was there, and their early education, their early training, was not yet controlled, and oftentimes you will find they uttered what was never heard from the lips of their Divine Master. Anxious, zealous, they were often severely tried by the infidelity and selfishness of the men they served, and hard was it for them to preserve religion in its pure form even in their own hearts and among their followers; and, as year followed year, new teachers arose, and the law of Love became less active, the passions of men were strong, and as Christianity was taught, the severity of the old laws and the evils of man nearly crushed out religion; and now, when the reign of the law of Love has become almost a fable, angels have bent down and breathed upon the earth once more. . . . Man at the present time has progressed beyond those dogmatical teachings, and the whole earth is in a progressive state."

Such is an imperfect recollection of her communication taken from rapid notes.

As to a personal devil, all the Spirits from whom I have received communications (and they are numerous) deny the existence of such a being. The sin and evil which prevail so much throughout the world, and which the author of "Powers of the Air" cannot account for on any other hypothesis, are attributed to the exercise of man's *free will*, by which he

also achieves the highest virtues. Every animal, I am instructed, is represented, with his peculiar characteristics, in man; and all these have to meet the Spirit, which is God-like in itself. Still man's progression depends upon a proper use of these traits, which give thus an *individuality* to the Divine Spirit within. "You cannot" (said one of the communications I received) "have colour without a cause; and you cannot find expression of character without the aid of the deep-toned bass of the animal nature, holy in itself, but made unholy from abuse."

Every member of the human body, every faculty of the soul, every *passion*, even, of the human heart, is declared to be *good*, as fire and water are good and useful, when held under wise control, but are dangerous and destructive when suffered to run riot.

As for the terms salvation and damnation, there is, I am told, no other salvation known than the being saved from the *abuse* of these good faculties of body and soul, which the Almighty has given us, and no other damnation than that which *we* inflict on *ourselves*, here or hereafter, by continuing in those vicious acts or desires which, just so long as they hold us in bondage, make us *insensible* to the attraction of Heaven. Our surroundings, it is declared, when we enter upon the new life, will, as in the instances of the miser and the pure young child, be precisely adapted to the condition of our souls when we pass hence. The millionaire, however dark and grovelling his soul, may in this life be the possessor of a palatial residence, its walls hung with works of art of the most exalted genius, which he, in his *soul*, is incapable of appreciating; while the inspired artists who produced them may have to live in poverty, their home destitute of all outward embellishment, though with a world of art ever germinating in their bosoms. But "in the twinkling of an eye" all is changed; the one finds himself a dweller in darkness, the others in a world resplendent with beauty, because our dwellings will be the outflow and counterpart of our own interior condition, more or less dark and gloomy, or more sublime and beautiful, according as we are low and debased, or pure, elevated, and God-like in our affections.

I. V. W.

IS SPIRITUALISM A RELIGION?

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—In reading "Ebor's" letter in criticism of an article in "LIGHT," I am glad he has stated his views. As I agree altogether with the article I may be allowed perhaps to state my views as against "Ebor's."

A great deal depends on definition. "Ebor" will excuse me if I say he has confused me. His definition of religion at the start is "the duties which man owes to his God." At the end he accepts the apostle's definition, "True religion and undefiled is to visit the widow and the fatherless, and keep himself unspotted from the world." Neither is to my mind a complete definition, as I prefer Christ's golden rule, or Carlyle's "vital relation to the universe." But "Ebor's" first definition does not necessarily include the latter, nor the latter the first.

Nor do I accept the definition of Spiritualism as "a class of *phenomena* [the italics are mine] by means of which man is brought into contact with departed human beings, so that both can *mutually interchange ideas*." I hope to shew that Spiritualism must be far more than this.

The definition of science—from "*Scio—I know*"—as "knowledge," is not correct either. "Ebor" meant *exact* knowledge as he opposes it to religion with its "*variable*" ideas. Now the fact is science is no more exact than theology, or religious ideas. Science brags a good deal. If theology allowed the progressive idea it would be on a par with natural sciences. Mathematics, perhaps, may be called the exact science, though even there it is approximate only in some things to exact knowledge, and of nothing can it fully define the everything. But in all other sciences of natural truth there is no complete, all-round exactness, any more than there is in theology. Ask Huxley to tell you what force, matter, electricity, anything indeed, really is and really means, and he will tell you that his knowledge is approximately exact, good enough for working purposes, but modifiable by other facts yet to be discovered.

Now the difference between "Ebor" on the one hand and the editorial and myself on the other is that we say religion and morals are necessary to Spiritualism, and "Ebor" says "no." According to his definition of Spiritualism he is right, but that is what I do not admit as possible, and I presume the editor would say the same.

Now "Ebor" says that in spiritual intercourse the Unseen and we "mutually interchange ideas." But that leads to a further question. The intercourse may be clumsily, partially, clearly, or completely done. The *modus operandi* is as important here as in natural science.

I guess from "Ebor's" letter that he has had some experience of Spiritual communion. If so, I presume he will know that there is a keenly marked law of that communion which in one aspect may be called sympathetic contact, and in another repulsive force. That is, the Spirit world can only approach us where there is the element of *en rapport*. You could not commune with Nebuchadnezzar unless Nebuchadnezzar and you were in some points, and perhaps in nearly all, alike in sympathies, thinking and living. Even a wife on earth may find herself—and not unhappily so, if so!—barred from communion with her late husband by this law. It is so on earth in a duller form, for put a Hottentot beside a Faraday, and the communion will be very slight, though bodily coarseness prevents the full play of Spiritual affinity and repulsion.

The thing to settle, therefore, in the method of Spiritualism is what are the necessary constituents of building up character to meet the better and loftier side of the Spirit world. Their progress is progression in felt, lived-out relationship to their known environment, and our business this side is to get on to the same level. Now I hold that God is part of that encirclement, and Spiritualists must reach the ideas of the Spirits in all things, and their modes of living, to be *en rapport*. To my mind the science of method just now is even more important than the science of *phenomena*, in spite of "Ebor."

So important is it that unless we develop ourselves as Spiritualists on all sides of our life on our own lines—for they cannot be found in existing churches—I do not see what use there is in the movement.

I may add that Spiritualism is, to my mind, something more than mere phenomena or communion. That is only the means to an end—the blessing of earth. The angels' main business is service, and if we are to be at one with them, and our movement is to be of any good as a movement, we must serve. You will not do that unless you make it an all-inclusive religion.

I am surprised still more at "Ebor's" saying, "A knowledge of Nature's laws or forces does not teach us *our duty to God* [the italics are his], or *what God requires of us*." Now that is precisely what they do, and are meant to do. It is part of Nature's laws that to be healthy one must be clean. That is evidently God's mind, as every law is, and thereby He proclaims what is His idea of man's duty. Again, "Ebor" says these laws only teach us "the powers of God." That would mean the world is a mere wonder-show. Now "Ebor" cannot possibly mean that, surely; for every attainment of knowledge has its ultimate in us in teaching us *how to be and to do*.

To me, true Spiritualism is the reaching the mind—the law, the reality—behind the pictorial signs. Phenomena—or form—are the *via media* of Spirit; spirituality is the subjective method and true effect; Spiritualism is the science by which that spirituality is built up.—Yours truly,

EPSILON.

DEATH.

FITTON.—Elizabeth, wife of Richard Fitton, late President of the Manchester Association, died August 5th, and interred August 8th at the Cheetham Hill Cemetery, Manchester.

RECEPTION AT MR. WM. TEBB'S.—Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Tebb entertained a number of their friends on Tuesday evening last, at their hospitable residence, 7, Albert-road, Gloucester Gate, Regent's Park, N.W. Among the company were the Hon. J. L. O'Sullivan; Dr. G. Wyld; Mr. and Mrs. White; Mr. and Mrs. Howard, of Dulwich; Mr. W. F. R. Weldon, B.A., of Cambridge; Mr. W. J. Collins, B. Sc.; Miss Deekens; Signor G. Damiani; Mr., Mrs., and Miss Cooper; Mrs. and Miss Hewetson; Mr. and Miss Shorter; Mrs. Strawbridge; Mr. Pease; Mr., Mrs. and Miss Lewis; Mr. Frank Podmore; Miss Ingram; Miss Houghton; Rev. W. Miall; Mr. Cornelius Pearson; Mr. Slater; Mr. Berks T. Hutchinson; Mr. Speer; Mrs. Petman; Mrs. Western; Mr. Thos. Blyton, and others. Considerable interest was shewn in a collection of Spirit photographs, kindly exhibited by the Hon. J. L. O'Sullivan, who explained to the assembled guests the circumstances in connection with their production, under the careful observation of the Count de Bullet and himself in Paris. Vocal and instrumental music, interspersed throughout the evening, was contributed by Mr. and Miss Cooper, Miss Hewetson, and the Misses Tebb, which greatly enhanced the pleasures of the evening.

TO CONTRIBUTORS.

Reports of the proceedings of Spiritualist Societies in as succinct a form as possible, and authenticated by the signature of a responsible officer, are solicited for insertion in "LIGHT." Members of private circles will also oblige by contributing brief records of noteworthy occurrences at their sances.

The Editor cannot undertake the return of manuscripts unless the writers expressly request it at the time of forwarding, and enclose stamps for the return postage.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES.

The Annual Subscription for "LIGHT," post free to any address within the United Kingdom, or to places comprised within the Postal Union, including all parts of Europe, the United States, and British North America, is 10s. 10d. per annum, paid in advance.

ADVERTISEMENT CHARGES.

Five lines and under, 3s. One inch, 4s. 6d. Half-column, £1. Whole column, £2 2s. Page, £4. A reduction made for a series of insertions.

* All communications may be addressed to the Editor, 13, Whitefriars-st., E.C. Obseques and Post Office Orders may be made payable to EDWARD T. BENNETT, at the Chief Office, London. Halfpenny Postage Stamps received for amounts under 10s.

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC.

"LIGHT" may be obtained of E. W. ALLEN, Ave Maria-lane, London, and of all Booksellers.

Subscribers whose subscriptions have expired will receive the last copy due to them in a coloured wrapper, after which the paper will be discontinued unless the subscription is renewed.

Our Correspondents will greatly oblige us if they will take care, in every case, to write on ONLY ONE SIDE of the paper.

SPECIAL NOTICE.

The Editor of "Light" is away from town, and hopes to receive the indulgence of his readers in consequence of the difficulty of directing the management of the paper from a distance.

NOTES BY THE WAY.

The second number of the *Psychological Review* maintains the high character of the first. We are extremely glad to find that Spiritualism again possesses a magazine such as was the old *Spiritual Magazine* in days which are already beginning to seem remote. It was not creditable to the movement that it did not support one magazine which could give space to the more elaborate and lengthy articles which our own columns, for instance, would be unable to accommodate. Now that that reproach is removed we trust that Spiritualists will support the venture, and contribute to its pages the sort of matter which will make the *Review* of permanent historical value.

Our contemporary accords praise to our "Notes by the Way," as being of especial value. "In these paragraphs the conductors take notice of all that concerns Spiritualism in current literature and events, and when the history of the movement comes to be written, all this will be of no small value." It is disposed to think "that space is wasted by the consideration (apparently with approval) of such writers as Ingersoll." We cannot coincide in this opinion. We have considered Ingersoll as a sign of the times. We have carefully abstained from entering into the merits and demerits of his particular utterances; but we have not disguised our opinion that his assaults upon vulgar theology have been of distinct value to the cause of truth. They have laid bare popular errors in a way that no writer has ever done before; and by so doing they have drawn an amount of attention to popular misconceptions and fallacies which must be serviceable in removing them from the thinking mind. This, in our judgment, is direct gain.

The utterances of Ingersoll have also afforded an opportunity to various divines to come forward in defence of their position, and to point out not only the errors of taste, but also the weak points in criticism, of which the lecture contains not a few. Before us lies a thick pamphlet, containing replies from Bishop Fallows, Dr. Thomas, Dr. Lorimer, Dr. Courtney, Professors Swing and Curtis. We have already seen that Dr. Parker in this country has equipped himself for a tilt with Ingersoll. These representative men, in their several ways, bring out their individual views of truth, and make a not inconsiderable contribution to the settlement of some questions which Ingersoll's drastic criticism has brought into discussion. It should be a matter of rejoicing, rather than of complaint, that this has been the result. We have little doubt that such methods of purification are necessary and beneficent in their action.

The *Psychological Review* contains also a very closely reasoned paper on the Hindu doctrine of Karma, by Mr. C. C. Massey. The Western student of Buddhism is apt to fail in his endeavours to assimilate the metaphysical doctrines set forth by Eastern

writers; and the nice distinctions, which the subtle and flexible intellect of the Hindu makes with endless refinement and minuteness, are wasted upon him. Mr. C. C. Massey's metaphysical type of mind and the great attention that he has paid to these and kindred subjects enable him to grasp what most of us fail in getting firm hold of; and his clear and precise style conveys what he has to say as plainly as can be desired. With all this, however, we suspect that many readers will rise from the perusal of the argument with a sense of despair at their inability to digest and assimilate ideas of the value and moral grandeur of which they yet have a very present realisation.

"Spiritualism amongst Savage Tribes" is a very interesting account (in the same magazine) of some experiences with the Birrarks or Spirit mediums among the Kurnai of Australia, which will well repay perusal.

The Boston (U.S.A.) *Index*, which propounds as its object "to promote the practical interests of pure religion, to increase fellowship in the Spirit, and to encourage the scientific study of man's religious nature and history," has been candid enough to further these ends by admitting to its pages a long and cogent letter on "Science and Spiritualism," by W. Emmette Coleman. Mr. Coleman writes with his accustomed clearness, and presents what the *Index* describes as "a lucid and calm argument" in a very telling manner. He especially avoids a common fault in controversy, and "greatly strengthens his reasoning by his very moderation." But we are not concerned as much with his argument—beyond a passing word of pleasure that it should have found a place in a journal so cultured and so widely read as the *Index*—as we are with the editorial comments upon it. These are fairer than is usual with unfriendly critics, and are distinctly animated by a tolerant and broad spirit.

The *Index*, after a tribute to the writer's fairness and candour, declines to "attempt to traverse in order Mr. Coleman's statement of cases which he thinks prove the hypothesis of Spirit communion." There are, however, two questions which apply to all in some degree. "First, admitting that all possible chances for fraud have been eliminated, is it not possible that honest self-delusion, which Mr. Coleman affirms to prevail largely in spiritual phenomena, extends also into these cases? Second, is it not possible that the psychic force, which, it is admitted, can now explain a very large part of the phenomena without the necessity of Spirit influence, will also, when better understood, explain the other part in the same way?" These queries find a ready answer in the experience of careful investigators. Psychic force is the mere instrument. It cannot, alone and unaided, explain anything. It is not an intelligent force: whence then comes the intelligence? In Mr. Crookes's words: Who is the intelligent operator at the other end of the line? The answer is, Spirit—unembodied intelligence. Of what kind is that intelligence? First, noting in a parenthesis that to prove the existence of intelligence outside of a physical body is to entitle Spiritualism to a front rank in Science, we reply that the intelligence is of infinitely various kinds, some high, some low, some desirable to be associated with, some not; and that it much depends on the manifold conditions of investigation what result is obtained. There are, apparently, men who are honest and who yet fail altogether to get results that encourage them to persevere. These must relinquish the search, and accept or reject the copious testimony that has now accumulated. There are others who find their proofs ready to their hands, and seem at once to be placed in communion with their friends. These will, or will not, test and verify what reaches them, with more than scientific care. If they do not, their evidence is valueless to all except themselves. If they do, they will soon find that Spirit-identity is a very difficult thing to establish by irrefragable evidence. But, if only a few cases be clearly made out, what infinite importance attaches to them; what infinite possibilities do they foreshadow!

The *Index* concludes its notice by some words of sound sense, which we make no apology for transferring to our columns. Spiritualists need to be frequently warned that the vagaries and eccentricities of the individual reflect disastrously on the movement at large; and that a subject, in itself so antagonistic to modern methods of thought, is heavily weighted by fraud, by moral obliquity, and even by unreasoning enthusiasm. "Spiritualism," says the *Index*, "has been greatly hindered hitherto in getting its case into the court of science by the large amount

of mercenary fraud connected with it. Latterly, also, many of its leaders have seemed to us to have assumed an attitude savoring too much of the old theological arrogance toward those who cannot pronounce the Spiritualistic *shibboleth*. Then, too, moral discredit has been brought upon the movement, in spite of the many morally excellent people that are believers in the Spiritualistic theory, by the assaults, theoretical and practical, which have been made on the marriage institution by a large and active section of Spiritualists. But in the last year new interest, outside of Spiritualistic believers, has been awakened with regard to the phenomena and their cause. If this interest can be met and seconded by an increasing class of fair-minded and pure-minded and genuinely liberal believers, such as Mr. Coleman represents, who are not so much concerned to maintain the *ism* of their faith as to discover truth and promote righteousness, the two parties may be of mutual service in lifting Spiritualism to new vantage-ground for benefiting humanity."

The friends of the Rev. Dr. Maurice Davies, who has recently left for South Africa, will be pleased to learn that an effort is being made to raise a sum of money sufficient to enable Mrs. Davies and her ten children to join him as early as possible in his new home. The amount required is about £250, and it has been decided to raise this sum as a token of regard and esteem for the doctor. It is deemed desirable that Mrs. Davies should sail almost immediately, and it is therefore hoped that those who are disposed to contribute will do so without delay. We cannot doubt that a good many Spiritualists, amongst whom Dr. Davies was very highly esteemed, will be glad to help, and they can do so by forwarding their contributions to T. Ferrers Guy, Esq., 8, Vicarage-gate, Kensington, W., hon. sec. to the Rev. Charles Maurice Davies' Testimonial.

SIR THOMAS MORE.

The following is taken from Cresacre More's "Life of Sir T. More," quoted in notices of the historic persons buried in the Chapel of St. Peter ad Vincula in the Tower of London, by Doyne C. Bell.

"His head was put upon London Bridge, where traitors' heads are set up upon poles, his body was buried in the Chapel of St. Peter in the Tower, in the belfrey, or, as some say, as one entereth into the vestry, near unto the body of the holy martyr Bishop Fisher.

"That which happened about Sir Thomas' winding sheet was reported as a miracle by my Aunt Ropers, Mrs. Clement, and Dorothy Collie, wife unto Mr. Harris. Thus it was: his daughter Margaret, having distributed all her money to the poor for her father's soul, when she came to bury his body at the Tower she had forgotten to bring a sheet; and there was not a penny of money left among them all. The servant Dorothy told Mrs. Roper, who said she might try to get it on credit. 'I am not known in this neighbourhood,' replied the servant. 'At any rate,' said Mrs. Roper, 'go and do what you can.' She went to the next draper's shop, agreed about the price, and pretending to look for some money in her purse, she found the exact sum for which she had agreed with the draper, not one penny more or less, though she knew before certainly that she had not previously one cross (farthing) about her. This the same Dorothy affirmed constantly to Doctor Stapleton when they both lived at Douay in Flanders in Queen Elizabeth's reign."

Signor Damiani is in London, and staying temporarily at 105, Lansdowne-road, Kensington Park, W., where he desires his numerous friends to address him.

MR. J. J. MORSE, we are glad to announce, having recovered from his late illness, has been able to resume his usual duties, with the exception of platform labours, which he will not recommence until the end of next month.

DEPARTURE OF MR. BERKS T. HUTCHINSON.—MR. B. T. Hutchinson sailed on Thursday from Southampton for Cape Town, per s.s. Durban, of the Union Steamship Line. Our friend, who came to England upon professional business, which he has in every respect successfully accomplished, leaves a hearty and kindly "good-bye" to all his friends, and warmly wishes "LIGHT" a prosperous and useful career. As an earnest student of matters spiritual, and an indefatigable worker in his distant home, Mr. Hutchinson has done excellent service for Spiritualism; and the many friends he has in England will unite with us in wishing him a safe voyage home.

THE PENDING CRISIS IN SPIRITUALISM AND HOW TO MEET IT.

By Mrs. Tappan-Richmond.

The following is a somewhat abridged report of a trance address given some time ago by Mrs. Tappan-Richmond before the members of the British National Association of Spiritualists. It has never yet been printed, and is as valuable now as at the time it was delivered:—

Friends, the subject for this evening's discussion is "The pending crisis in Spiritualism, and how to meet it." It has never been claimed that Spirits are oracular; it is therefore, presumable that you will consider the opinions expressed here as the opinions and knowledge of the individual Spirits addressing you. The remarks we shall make this evening are upon a subject that must necessarily interest Spiritualists, or those who are interested in Spiritualism, only, since those who admit no Spiritualism can admit no crisis in it; therefore our remarks will not be either to convince the sceptic or to give any evidence of the fact of Spiritualism itself, but to treat of a subject that is admittedly in the world, and to treat of it with reference to its present aspect and appearances from our side of existence, leaving you who are on the earthly side to judge of its applicability to your own wants.

The most casual observer must discover in the atmosphere that relates to Spiritualism a change—the indications of a pending crisis. Perhaps you are already in the midst of it. Whatever that crisis is, it betokens another step, and therefore as individuals you will each have something to do, or will be made to do something in the taking of that step. The period of incubation is usually a period of waiting; but when the germ bursts, when the fledglings are out of the shell, there is somewhat that pertains to the preservation of their life and fitting them for their individual action in the great spheres of existence. The period of incubation is past in Spiritualism; the fledglings are here in the world. There are various sorts, expressive of various opinions and ideas, but each has its natal source in that which we denominate the Spiritualism of to-day; and whatever the form, the special variety of this offspring, the fact of Spiritualism itself yielding a brood in existence is evidence of life, and that life is to be perpetuated in exact proportion to the value of what is produced. If, therefore, these various fledglings of truth, some of which take the form of material manifestations, others of mental classifications, others of psychic force or unconscious cerebration, others of the different thoughts and philosophy within the ranks of Spiritualism—if these various truths are of any value in the world, they will survive through the next step that is to be taken. If they are weaklings without value, having naught to do in the next cycle of Spiritual unfoldment or (to use a materialistic word) "evolution," then of course they must sink, having performed their little office by coming into existence, or having been perhaps a foil to point the way to the real truth.

The value of Spiritualism is the value of life itself, and you are to consider whether in any crisis ignorance is able to cope with knowledge. Very properly and justly, the chairman of the Psychological Department of the British Association refused to listen to the opinions of people who had never known anything of the subject upon which they were speaking; and very properly those who know nothing of Spiritualism, but give an opinion of it in the world, are not accounted its progeny; only those have a right to a voice who know something, though all have a right to investigate that they may know; but knowledge of one fact gives the possessor of that knowledge the right to give his testimony; and those who have material, intellectual, or spiritual experiences of any kind are, therefore, valuable as the results of the first decade of Spiritualism. The manifestation being here, the intellectual idea established and fixed in the minds of individuals, and the Spiritual perception also realised by individuals, Spiritualism has taken its first step and yielded its first fruits to the world in the form of the earliest, perhaps the soonest over, of the blossoms of thought that shall ultimately flow from it. This next step, then, portends that Spiritualism is coming nearer to you; it has broken the incrustation of your lives; it has cracked the shell in which your minds and thoughts have been environed; it has made itself manifest by your firesides and hearthstones, in your social circles and by your family altars; it is a fact. And the next step it must take is to fix itself as a form of life not only into your consciousness but into your inner or interior being.

There are those who in the present struggle are afraid of

what the outside world, whether in the form of science, materialistic tendencies, law, or other powers, may do to Spiritualism. Have no fear. That which survives the weakness and folly of its friends can survive always its enemies. The foes of Spiritualism are of its own household; but even these have no effect upon it. The display of individualism in the ranks of Spiritualism is perhaps its greatest evidence of strength. You are, no two of you, vowed to think alike on any given subject connected with it. No theologies or philosophies connected with it represent any unanimity of thought except the one fact of existence, communion, and the over-shadowing Spirituality of the universe. There is greater strength in this diversity than in all the compulsory unity of large ecclesiastical bodies; any power can be held together by force of authority, but that which flourishes under the assertion of individuality of various kinds must be a plant of sturdy growth and have its roots deeper than the mere surface religions of society, and its branches must extend higher than the mere canopy of cathedral dome or the vaulted roof of the Vatican. There must be also an impelling power that over-shadows the strength of Spiritualism by the very fact of the individuality and individual tendencies of its enlightenment. The great power of unity in Church and State has been enforced and man has been swallowed up in this unity. The individual soul is forgotten for the salvation of nations or races; and the materialist declares this higher unity in that vast universe that swallows up not only atoms and worlds but minds, spirits, and souls in its great principle of a universe governed by law. Spiritualism declares the individual from the first, reveals the spirit of man, strikes out from the centre, and shews that this is the centre, man in himself, the life which God in the infinite possesses, and which is therefore never lost, never in its turn swallowed up, but always unfolding. The world is passing from the crisis of that which has been considered unity to the crisis of individuality and strength in the strength of the individual. Society has been governed from without; all departments of human life have been served from the exterior; and you must serve the State or the Church, or whatever is to be served, but if the truth knocks at your heart and bursts open one of these barriers, the cry of "heresy" pursues you. Now Spiritualism comes to exalt the individual, to say to the man, "Your soul, your opinion, your spirit, is, in the sight of God, as valuable as that of any other." It does not come to assert personalities, or to make you self-seeking, but to shew that, in the pursuit of truth, whatever power or inspiration is yours is so by right of your being connected with the infinite source of inspiration, and that this may flow to you from God through angels or Spirits.

It will be an hour of trial in the coming twelve months for Spiritualists to adapt themselves to this new kind of perception that is gradually dawning upon them that Spiritualism is not only a fact but a life. For the first part of the investigation the pursuit of the fact occupies the mind; then it is a novelty; then you may sport with it with your intellectual humours; but when it comes to be a life then it is a more serious matter. Will you have it a religion? Will you have it an æsthetic philosophy? Will you take it into your lives and daily actions? Will it be a portion of the confraternity of lives that are interblent in its pursuit? And the serious matter is here. From fact of mind to reality of existence is the very crisis that you are passing through to-day—from an intellectual proposition or a material demonstration to the reality which confronts you in your innermost life, and makes it valuable not only for time but for eternity. There will be enough to test your strength and enough to bring your individual diversities of opinion into a unity, a harmony of strength. We advocate unity if there can be harmony. We know of no unity without it. That kind of compulsory power that is exercised in Church and State is valuable perhaps for organisations that depend upon superficial excitement and superficial causes for prosperity; but we must not mistake these for real unity. The only unity that can possibly come to Spiritualism and Spiritualists in the world is a unity of harmonious action and accord, which means respectful deference to the opinion of others; which means that we are not wholly right or wrong, but that all may have a portion of the truth; which means that no one arrogates to him or herself the right or privilege to dictate as to the opinions of others but will listen with absolute fairness to those expressions of opinion and claim the privilege of difference; will make clear and plain the amount of truth as perceived by his or her mind without in any way considering it obligatory upon others

to perceive the truth in the same way or express it in the same manner. The value of music is that it is not a monotone, that all tunes are not upon the same key, but that all are arranged in that harmony of true diversity which constitutes the heavenly sound of true music. And human life should be so adjusted and Spiritual qualities so arranged, that in this room there should be a symphony of thought, each one complementing or supplementing others, each one giving what another may lack, and all recognising the voice of the whole as valuable in the great diapason of Spiritualism. We have much need of this expansion, of this recognition that every phase of Spiritual manifestation, and every quality of thought evolved in human minds by each phase is valuable to make the whole complete.

(To be continued.)

FATE AND FREE-WILL.

Through the Mediumship of the Author of "Life Beyond the Grave."

In a recent discussion the question was raised "Whether persons' lives are mapped out beforehand, and whether they are destined to pass through certain experiences in spite of any will of their own." A clairvoyant present, who had the gift of sometimes successfully foreseeing events in persons' lives, made the remark, "If events in our lives are not predestined, how is it that I often see what is going to happen as plainly as if it were already occurring?" Reflections on this question provoked the following communication:—

Your question raises a very large issue, and one that has puzzled many minds. All persons wish to believe that they have a control over their own destinies. It is humiliating to think that certain events in our lives are pre-arranged and that we are, as it were, mere puppets destined to go through certain experiences and then be marched on, it may be, to fresh scenes and pastures new.

"How is it," your clairvoyant friend asks, "that I can see what is going to happen if it is not predestined?" We answer that the clairvoyant sometimes sees correctly and sometimes fails. This shews conclusively that what he sees is more or less guess-work on the part of those who assist his vision, for the clairvoyant is undoubtedly aided in the exercise of his talent by Spirits. There are clairvoyant Spirits who can foresee events and they present pictures to his mind such as they themselves see. You ask—Are the Spirits aided by other and higher Spirits? Sometimes it is so, and we may say that the higher the source from which the communication emanates the more likely is it to be correct. We do not mean, however, to say that, because higher Spirits see more clearly therefore the events they see are bound to happen. We have known many such predictions to be falsified, and we explain it in this way. The Spirits see certain causes at work which they know must result in certain events, just as you know in your life that if you see a child running across the street when an omnibus is approaching, the child will be run over *unless* something is done to prevent it. Whether this something will be done depends again on other contingencies. You must be able to read the thoughts of the child, and see if it is likely to have sense enough to stop in time, and you must also take into account whether the driver of the omnibus sees the child, and also whether, seeing the child, he has the power to prevent an accident. If he cannot arrest the progress of his vehicle, and if the child has not the sense or the ability to get out of the way, a collision is inevitable, and every looker-on could predict the result.

This is only a very small illustration of what happens on a much wider scale where the events of your life-time are concerned; but yet the same principle governs both cases. It is *not a foregone conclusion* in either case, and we wish you to understand that there is as much chance of predicted events not happening, as there is of the child not being run over in the case we have illustrated.

You see, therefore, that it is merely a matter of reason and calculation. Astronomers predict eclipses and the appearance of comets on the very same principles every day, and sometimes they are mistaken, and a comet appears that they did not expect. So also are the storms from America predicted, but yet they do not always happen as expected; because those who predict them have not been able to take into account some circumstance which they are unacquainted with, and which may prevent the storm from reaching your side of the Atlantic.

We think we have given you illustrations enough to render it quite clear how predictions are made. Nevertheless you think there are some cases where the events are so minutely described beforehand, even to the dresses that people will wear, that it seems incredible that anyone could calculate such things by any known process of reasoning. We admit there are many puzzling instances that might be quoted against our explanation, but, if you take into account that nothing happens without a cause, you may even conceive the possibility of a person's dress being foreseen, because it is a fact that everyone dresses, or rather chooses his garments, according to his taste for the time being, and the dress is therefore to some extent an index of

character. Gloomy, stiff, formal persons do not usually dress in light tweeds or gay attire. Their dress must necessarily be influenced by the humour they are in. Imagine then the possession of much higher powers than you in your world can possibly have, by Spirits of the high order, who give the most truthful predictions, and you have an idea of how it is that even minute details can be foreseen. If you cannot imagine it you must take our word for it. There are many things connected with the Spirit world that you cannot understand.

The next question comes,—If certain events look likely to happen which it is not desired should happen, how shall you prevent them from happening? You can only do this by an exercise of the will in an opposite direction, and if you do not know in what direction you are going—as you certainly do not in the majority of cases—there is no remedy against unhappy results like *prayer*. If you are unconsciously going wrong your Spirit friends may then be enabled to direct your footsteps, so that you may escape the threatened danger. The more powerful the prayer of the person concerned the more difficult it will be for anyone to predict his or her future. You cannot foresee in what direction they will go when they possess a power of self-guidance that may upset all your calculations.

It is needless, however, to say that the majority of people do not practise prayer to any great extent, and therefore their road is more easy to track. They follow the bent of their passions in the direction, as your scientists would say, “of the least resistance,” and of course if you know their weaknesses you can predict what will be their end. There are many men in the flesh who are excellent judges of character, and who can successfully predict the careers of those they come in contact with. This shews on a limited scale how the same law is in operation in your world which enables clairvoyants and Spirits to foretell events. It is precisely the same gift exercised from a higher standpoint. You instance the case of a person foretelling the number of a lottery ticket as an example how events can be predicted that apparently depend on chance. There may be some such instances which seem to point in an opposite direction, but we do not believe in chance. There is a cause for everything, and even the drawing of a lottery ticket depends on causes that can be explained. A Spirit may impress the lucky drawer of the ticket in question *when* to draw, or where to place his hand, or may even have power to place the ticket in his hand. In many ways the result predicted may be brought about and if there were a Spirit concerned in the prediction he would be anxious to fulfil his own prediction, and would very likely be of such a grade that he could the more readily control matter and bring about the result he longed for.

We think we have made it quite clear how predictions are made. You may perhaps think that man has the power to mould his own destiny, but you must not forget that there are certain events he cannot control, and which are fated, *so far as he is concerned*. He cannot, for instance, control the conditions of his birth, and it is precisely these conditions which affect his whole life in the body. He is born into the world with certain surroundings, and although he may, by exercise of his will, raise himself out of his surroundings, yet he cannot escape the consequences of his being so circumstanced. His parents could have controlled his destiny had they not married, or had they married *earlier* or *later* in life, or had they severally married some other person. But then of course he would have been a different creature, with a different destiny, because having a different character. This brings us back to the all-important question of a choice of partners in life, and another question of destiny (and it is a very important one, as you must see when you consider how much depends on it for your offspring) will arise—“What power have the parents to control their destiny in regard to marriage? Are they doomed to marry certain persons, or have they a free will in the matter?” Most certainly we say they have a free will in the matter. In no step in life have men and women a greater freedom of will than in marriage, and in no step in life are the consequences so momentous. Every woman has the full power of refusing any man. Of course she has not the power of making men propose, but if they do not that is due to certain causes which could be easily ascertained by anyone who could read the minds of the lady's admirers. Each of them has his own opinion of the lady's fitness to be his wife, and of his own intentions respecting her. She may not know the reason why she is left unasked, but the cause is there nevertheless, and if she could alter it perhaps she would—if she but knew it. As society is constituted in your world, it is not given to everyone to know what others think of them; so of course the lady in question does not know the causes that are at work which prevent her marrying, and she puts it down to destiny.

It must be evident that destiny can have nothing to do with all the ill-fated marriages there are in the world or there ceases to be any free will for man; for more than one-half of the evil in the world arises from ante-natal causes, and were man not a free agent in this step above all others there would be no alternative but to charge the Almighty with the responsibility. That is obviously impossible. At the time a man or woman is about to select his or her partner in life he stands, as it were, at the junction of two roads. He can either go this way or that. There is no destiny in the matter. His choice is governed by causes

that are as clear as noonday to those who can read his character—his inner motives. The latter are the result of years of training and development of character, and they impel him to take one course or the other. If animal passion rules him he takes one course; if worldly motives guide him he takes another; and if spiritual considerations influence him he takes a third. He is a perfectly free agent, however powerfully circumstances may seem to control his movements. You see that his impulses may almost master him, but they are the result of gradually formed habits or ante-natal causes, producing certain inherited traits of character. If he has inherited tendencies towards evil or ignorance, of course he is to that extent a slave, and his free will may be said to be hampered. This is, alas, undeniable, and it causes, as we have said, more than half the evil in the world—more than half the cases that seem to militate against the theory that man possesses a free will. Oh, if parents could but see the working of Nature's laws! If they would but study these all-important subjects and strive, as far as they can, to live such pure and spiritual lives as would prevent their offspring from coming into the world with inherited tendencies to evil—to drink, to vice, to over-indulgence in animal passions—how immense would be the benefits to the world! Man is destined to be *free*! That is his destiny; but through the ignorance of his parents he is too often sent into the world a slave to evil passions, or, it may be, a slave to ignorance.

There is a work, which you have read, called “The Science of a New Life,”* which contains much valuable information on this subject. We wish all parents would read it. It contains some rules that are laid down as applicable to all men which it would be absurd to impose on all men alike, but, nevertheless, it is full of valuable suggestions on this very subject—the power of parents to control the characters of their children; and we therefore refer to it.

OUR CONTEMPORARIES.

“The Spiritualist.”

The opening article is a piece of good humoured banter, by the editor, upon the influence of mystery, as expressed in the narratives concerning the alleged wonders of Theosophy, as well as in the idea recently mooted in the columns of “*LIGHT*,” with regard to secret Spiritualist societies, matters upon which the writer of the article seems sceptical. In another part of the paper the editor says:—“A Theosophist writes to us that the Theosophical idea will gradually check the irregularities connected with mediumship. We think that ample evidence is on record that at present the Theosophists are more than double as much under the influence of the outcome of physical mediumship, as any other people connected with Spiritualism who have formed themselves into a society.”

The following disclaimer, and definition of Theosophy, by “C.C.M.” will be read with interest:—“I should like, if I can, to put an end to the absurd assumption that I and others of the Theosophical Society in London are ‘training for adeptship.’ To become ‘Adepts,’ in the sense of developing extraordinary psychical powers is *not* our special ambition; to become *Theosophists*, is. Theosophy, or knowledge of the Divine, can be obtained only by suppression of egotism. The divine life is impersonal; it does not say ‘I’ and ‘mine.’ You cannot irritate it, you cannot excite in it envy, or malice, or cupidity. The base of these passions is gone; not indeed annihilated, but submerged, transfigured, rather, in what Boehme called the Life of the Second Principle. That is Light and Love, the nature of the regenerate, from which his will, henceforth, acts spontaneously. No matter in what school of Theosophy you learn, ancient, mediæval, modern, Eastern or Western.”

“The Medium.”

The place of honour is occupied by the first instalment of a report of an address by the Hon. J. L. O'Sullivan detailing his experiences of Spiritualism. During his narration he exhibited photographs and paraffine moulds of Spirit forms, and gave descriptions of remarkable phenomena obtained in the dark, such as the photographing of Spirit forms and physical objects.

“Pericles” attempts the solution of the debated “orthodox Spiritualism” question, by inculcating four points of doctrine on which the teachings of the Spirits agree; viz., The existence of one God, the immortality of the soul, the duty of loving God and acting justly to all, and the reality of Spirit communion.

A synopsis of a recent sermon preached to the Plymouth Spiritualists by the Rev. C. Ware, having for its text “The Spirit of Man is the candle of the Lord” (Prov. xx. 23), is given, closing with the following sentence:—“There is around us a vast sea of undeveloped souls, enwrapped and enveloped in darkness; all the elements are there, but they lie buried and dormant. Our mission is to awaken these elements: to kindle the light that shall illuminate the entire being, and reflect the Divine image. May we be ourselves burning and shining lights, and let us labour to kindle it in every soul; that every Human Spirit may truly become ‘The candle of the Lord.’”

* London: J. Burns, 15, Southampton-row.

"The Herald of Progress."

The last number commences with another trance lecture through Mr. Wright, the Liverpool medium, having for its subject, "Jesus the Ideal." The control considered that Jesus was not a personal sacrifice for sin, but that all who sinned would have to endure the penalty consequent upon wrong doing. Jesus is styled "the leader of the humanitarian Church."

"A.T.T.P." records one of his remarkable "controls," which recounts the earth-life of a thief and suicide. The narrative is a warning against evil conduct and companionship.

The author of "The Religion of Jesus" contributes an article entitled "Cynthia's History;" and there are two communications from the medium through whom was communicated "Life beyond the Grave," entitled "The Equality of Men" and "Love and Worldliness," respectively.

"Critic" raises the following issue:—"Here we are face to face with phenomena that contradict all our experience in the matter of natural laws, and instead of establishing conditions to make it absolutely certain to ourselves and the most sceptical mind that we are not imposed upon, we place implicit faith in the media and their friends, and allow ourselves to be talked over and guided at the circles as if we were helpless babes. Is this right? If it is not, how in the name of everything true and honest can we expect to avoid being deceived?"

"The Banner of Light."

In the course of a notice concerning the twelve camp meetings already arranged for in America, the editor remarks:—"There are other camp meetings to be held, for which arrangements have not yet been perfected. Many societies of Spiritualists are negotiating for the purchase of pleasantly located tracts of land upon which to establish camp meetings during the next and subsequent years. The attendance at these meetings is one of their most notable features, varying in number from 5,000 to 30,000 persons, shewing no diminution from year to year, but rather an increase." This may serve as shewing the extended arrangements our American co-workers enter into, and as also testifying to the vitality of the cause across the water. Mr. W. J. Colville is in New York, and as usual has met with a hearty welcome, and is doing good service by his lectures.

"The Religio-Philosophical Journal."

We clip from this paper the following:—"Bishop the notorious has been a great 'mind reader' of late in London parlours, with a big fee. But sundry scientists—Lankester, Galton, Robertson, Croom, &c.—have taken him in hand and make him look small. They say 'he has no power of mind-reading' and that 'distinguished men' should not 'act as stalking horses to his notoriety.' Of course they should not, and would not if they had the wit to find out the fellow as Spiritualists found him out long ago. Who will Bishop gull next?"

SPIRITUALISM IN LONDON AND THE PROVINCES.

BRITISH NATIONAL ASSOCIATION.

The ordinary monthly Council meeting of the above was held at the rooms, 38, Great Russell-street, London, on Tuesday evening, the 9th inst., Mr. Desmond FitzGerald, vice-president, in the chair. There were no resignations of membership. Five new members were elected. After the usual routine business had been disposed of, it was resolved to defer the consideration of the report of the Conference Committee until the next meeting of the Council. A resolution was also passed to the effect that, as a paper was to be read upon Spiritualism at the coming Church Congress, to be held at Newcastle-on-Tyne, in October next, the secretary should write to the secretary of the Church Congress to ascertain if a representative from the B.N.A.S. could be admitted as a member of the Congress. A fortnight's leave of absence was accorded to the secretary, from August 29th to September 12th, during which time the rooms will be closed.

GOSWELL HALL.

Mr. Iver McDonnell again occupied the platform of this hall last Sunday evening, the subject of his discourse being "Prayer." During his remarks, he proceeded to examine the nature and capabilities of the human being, and established for himself a most logical position, viz., that man was by nature ever aspiring, and supplicating to a power higher, and outside of himself, which he calls God. This idea is inherent within the breast of all peoples on the earth, to a larger or lesser degree. His next point was to look into and analyse prayer, endeavouring to find out its application, whether it bears on spiritual or material wants and desires. The conclusion of the lecturer was that it affected the former, and not the latter, for he contended, in a forcible and interesting manner, that the best prayer for things in this world was to set to work with a will to attain the desired end. He also submitted the Lord's Prayer for consideration; taking each petition separately, he logically demonstrated that every one of them was intended to apply to our spiritual, not material wants. Altogether it was a most instructive and interesting discourse, and it is a great pity that the friends do not turn up in greater numbers to

sustain these Sunday services. Mr. McDonnell's abilities only need to be known, and when recognised they are bound to receive due appreciation. Many of the friends expressed their pleasure on learning from a contemporary of the recovery and return home of our friend Mr. J. J. Morse. We hope soon to see and hear him in our midst again. I may say several questions were asked, and replied to at the close of the above lecture.—J.N.G.

CARDIFF.

On Sunday, the 31st ult., at the rooms of the Cardiff Spiritualist Society, the hon. secretary occupied the first part of the evening by reading a selection from "Higher Aspects of Spiritualism" (M.A., Oxon) to an audience largely composed of strangers, some of whom were invited to attend the usual closing séance.

Last Sunday the guides of Mr. Brooks, trance speaker, gave an eloquent invocation, followed by an address upon the practical phases of Spiritualism and the utility of properly attending to its teachings. The necessity of discrimination in following up Spirit communion was also dwelt upon. In order to fill up the allotted time, and to shew some visitors who had not previously been privileged to attend any such meetings another phase of trance mediumship, the hon. sec. read Mrs. Tappan's oration commencing "And these signs shall follow them that believe." Several Spirit friends and visitors afterwards controlled the various mediums during the séance and a most interesting and instructive evening was spent.

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.

On Sunday morning last the N.S.E.S. held their usual experience meeting, and in the evening Mr. De Main delivered an admirable discourse, which met with the warm appreciation of the audience.

Work in the District.

Last Sunday was a red-letter day with the friends at Hetton-le-Hole and Houghton-le-Spring, the largest gatherings that ever assembled at a course of Spiritualistic services assembling at those places on that day. A great deal of opposition has for some time been experienced by the Spiritualists of the district, proceeding mainly from the Methodist section of the populace. So bitter has it been that Mr. Clennal, to whose courage and sturdy perseverance we must pay the highest tribute, has been subjected to the greatest amount of persecution, his opponents actually going so far as to endeavour to secure his discharge from his employment. This they luckily failed to accomplish. He thereupon resolved to gather the talent of the Newcastle district together and shew them what Spiritualism was, and what Spiritualists were made of. If the plaudits of the spectators might be taken as a guarantee of his success, truly he came off victorious. In the morning, at half-past ten, Mr. H. Burton, of Newcastle, as chairman, opened the first open-air service, in a field granted by a gentleman for the occasion, with an energetic and telling appeal for a generous consideration of Spiritualism with its broad and magnanimous teachings as compared with a narrow and contracted creedal Christianity. His fervent appeal caught the sympathies of the bulk of his large audience, which numbered from ten to twelve hundred, and as he was followed by the earnest and effective remarks of the other speakers, the feelings of the audience grew in enthusiasm to the end. Mr. Grey first spoke with a short and well timed address; afterwards Mr. Dodds delivered an able and telling lecture upon "Truth," and Mr. Westgarth, who followed, closed the meeting with an earnest and spirited declamation upon the hollow and effete condition of modern churchism. The news of this most successful morning service spread through the locality, and in the afternoon the inhabitants of the district poured in upon the ground until from between fifteen hundred and two thousand persons crowded around the platform. At two o'clock Mr. Burton again presided and again effectually secured the feeling of the assembly, being followed by a few warm remarks from Mr. Livingston. A brief and excellent address on Education, by Mr. Matuer, preceded Mr. Walker, who delivered himself with admirable effect upon this great and wonderful problem of modern Spiritualism. Mr. Dodds then held forth in a most effective manner upon the vast truths presented before us for our solution, thus closing the service, when the large and appreciative gathering reluctantly left the field. In the evening, at 6 p.m., between four and five hundred persons assembled in the somewhat moderately-sized Miners' Union Hall, Houghton-le-Spring. Mr. Burton, as chairman, delivered the first address upon "Spiritualism and its Future Effect upon the Curse of Kingcraft and Priestcraft." As he unfolded his discourse the audience applauded his stirring remarks to the echo. Mr. Grey followed him with an address, and Mr. Walker, in a few pithy remarks, received the high appreciation of the audience. Mr. Campbell followed with a fine discourse upon the errors of the old faith, and Mr. Westgarth succeeded him with a calm and dispassionate address upon the great truths of the new dispensation. An inspirational poem upon "Kingcraft and Priestcraft," was given by Mr. Grey, at the request of the audience. After the usual vote of thanks to chairman, speakers, singers, and others, the day's labours came to an interesting close.

NORTHUMBRIA.

WHO ARE THESE SPIRITUALISTS?

The following is a list of eminent persons, who, after careful investigation, have fully satisfied themselves of the reality of some of the phenomena of modern Spiritualism:—

Archbishop Whately; the late Lord Brougham; the Earl of Dunraven; the late Lord Lytton; the late Mr. Serjeant Cox, President of the Psychological Society of Great Britain; the late William Howitt; the late George Thompson; the late Harriett Martineau; Gerald Massey; T. Adolphus Trollope; S. C. Hall, F.S.A.

The late Abraham Lincoln, President U.S.A.; the late W. Lloyd Garrison; the late Hon. R. Dale Owen, sometime Minister of U.S.A. at the Court of Naples; the late Hon. J. W. Edmunds, sometime Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of New York; the late Professor Mapes, the eminent chemist, U.S.A.; the late Dr. Robert Hare, Professor of Chemistry at Harvard University, U.S.A.; Bishop Clarke, of Shooe Island, U.S.A.; Darius Lyman, of Washington.

William Crookes, editor of the *Quarterly Journal of Science*, Fellow, Gold Medallist, and Member of the Council of the Royal Society; Cromwell Varley, F.R.S., C.E.; A. R. Wallace, F.R.G.S., the eminent naturalist, sometime President of the Biological Section of the British Association for the Advancement of Science; W. F. Barrett, Professor of Physics in the Royal College of Science, Dublin; Lord Rayleigh, F.R.S., Professor of Physics in the University of Cambridge; the Earl of Crawford and Balcarres, F.R.S., President of the Royal Astronomical Society; Dr. Lockhart Robertson, F.R.S., long one of the editors of the *Journal of Science*; the late Dr. J. Elliotson, F.R.S., sometime President of the Royal Medical and Chirurgical Society of London; the late Professor de Morgan, President of the Mathematical Society of London; the late Dr. Wm. Gregory, F.R.S.E., Professor of Chemistry in the University of Edinburgh; the late Dr. Ashburner; the late Dr. Robert Chambers, F.R.S.E.; Professor, Ch. Cassal, LL.D.; Captain R. F. Burton, the celebrated traveller.

The late Emperor of Russia; the late Emperor Napoleon; President Thiers; the Hon. Alexandre Aksakof, Russian Imperial Councillor; the late Prince Emile de Sayn Wittgenstein; His Imperial Highness Nicholas, Duke of Leuchtenberg; the late Baron L. de Guldenstübbe; Count A. de Gasparin; the Baron and Baroness von Vay; the Baron du Potet; Mons. Léon Favre, Consul-General of France; Victor Hugo.

Professor Friedrich Zöllner, of Leipzig, the eminent physicist, author of "Scientific Treatises," "Transcendental Physics," &c., whose recent researches in this subject have attained a world-wide fame; Gustave T. Fechner, Professor of Physics in the University of Leipzig, also the author of many volumes bearing on the general subject of Psychology; Professor Scheibner, the renowned teacher of mathematics in the University of Leipzig; W. E. Weber, Professor of Physics in the University of Göttingen, and known as one of the main workers in connection with the doctrine of the Conservation of Energy; Immanuel H. Fichte, Professor of Philosophy at Leipzig; Professors Wagner and Butleroff, of the University of St. Petersburg; Dr. Maximilian Perty, Professor of Natural Science in the University of Berne; Dr. Franz Hoffman, Professor of Philosophy, Würzburg; Dr. Robert Friesé, of Breslau; Mons. Camille Flammarion, the well-known astronomer; and many other members of learned societies in this and other countries, and a vast number of persons eminent in literature, science, and art, and in the ranks of social life, whose names we are not at liberty to mention.

Is it Conjuring?

It is sometimes confidently alleged that mediums are only clever conjurers, who easily deceive the simple-minded and unwary. But how, then, about the conjurers themselves, some of the most accomplished of whom have declared that the "manifestations" are utterly beyond the resources of their art?—

ROBERT HOUDIN, the great French conjurer, investigated the subject of clairvoyance with the sensitive, Alexis Didier. In the result he unreservedly admitted that what he had observed was wholly beyond the resources of his art to explain. See "Psychische Studien" for January, 1878, p. 43.

PROFESSOR JACOBS.—*Licht, mehr Licht*, in its number of May 16th, 1880, gave a letter from the well-known professional conjurer, Jacobs, to the Psychological Society in Paris, avowing himself a Spiritualist, and offering suggestions for the discrimination of genuine from spurious manifestations.

SAMUEL BELLACHINI, COURT CONJURER AT BERLIN.—I hereby declare it to be a rash action to give decisive judgment upon the objective medial performance of the American medium, Mr. Henry Slade, after only one sitting and the observations so made. After I had, at the wish of several highly esteemed gentlemen of rank and position, and also for my own interest, tested the physical mediumship of Mr. Slade, in a series of sittings by full daylight, as well as in the evening in his bed-room, I must, for the sake of truth, hereby certify that the phenomenal occurrences with Mr. Slade have been thoroughly examined by me with the minutest observation and investigation of his surroundings, including the table, and that I have not in the smallest degree found anything to be produced by means of prestidigitative manifestations, or by mechanical apparatus; and that any explanation of the experiments which took place under the circumstances and conditions then obtaining by any reference to prestidigitation, is absolutely impossible. It must rest with such men of science as Crookes and Wallace, in London; Perty, in Berne; Butleroff, in St. Petersburg; to search for the explanation of this phenomenal power, and to prove its reality. I declare, moreover, the published opinions of laymen as to the "How" of this subject to be premature, and, according to my view and experience, false and one-sided. This my declaration, is signed and executed before a Notary and witnesses.—(Signed) SAMUEL BELLACHINI, Berlin, Dec. 6, 1877.

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